WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1.   1.   A method for providing security with respect to who provided digital

2. data at what time, said method comprising the steps of:

3.   performing a serially chained certification process including:

4.   (a) forming a first interval certification at a first server including the server's

5. identification, the start time of an interval chain in UTC, the start time of the interval

6. in UTC, the stop time of the interval, a public key for the interval, a digital signature

7. for the interval, signed by a previous interval's private key, and a digital signature for

8. the interval, signed by the interval's private key;

9.   (b) upon expiration of the first interval, destroying its private key;

10.   (c) configuring a second server to request a cross-certification for a second

11. interval so that the first server is effectively requested to provide independent proof of

12. the existence of the interval (and its public key) at a point in time witnessed by the

13. first server;

14.   (d) continuing steps (a), (b), and (c) for second, third, and following intervals

15. so that intervals are cross-chained with other servers to form a widely witnessed, temporal

16. web of signed intervals of time.